

A FILIPINO'S VIEWS.

Ramon Lala Writes on the Problem of Islands' Destiny.

WHAT THE NATIVES DEMAND.

NO STANDING ARMY NEEDED TO CONTROL THEM—A NATIVE REPUBLIC WOULD BE A FAILURE—ANNEXATION OR INDEPENDENCE THE ONLY SOLUTIONS—THEY WOULD PREFER AN AMERICAN PROTECTORATE.

Mr. Ramon Reyes Lala, who is now in New York, is the only native of the Philippines in the United States with the exception of the two delegates who are on their way to present the claims of the natives before the Paris peace commission. Mr. Lala is a member of a wealthy and influential native family. He was educated at St. John's College, London, and was for many years prominent in the business and social life of Manila. As a result of his interest in the revolutionary plans of the natives, he was compelled to change his residence to the United States a few years ago. He is a representative of the most intelligent and high-minded Filipinos, and his remarks are highly interesting as giving the views of the people most interested in the destiny of the Philippines. Mr. Lala is at present engaged in writing a history of the islands. His views on their destiny are summarized in the following article:

So much has been written about the Philippines in a purely descriptive way, that I pre-suppose some knowledge of them.

This article has to deal with a few of the problems that will soon ask for solution at the hands of the conquering Americans.

I believe America has an unparalleled opportunity—an opportunity not only for wealth and commercial advantage, but also for humanity and for civilization.

Though Manila is at present in the hands of the Americans, all the rest of Luzon and most of the other islands are held by the insurgents, who have also taken Iloilo and Cebu, the two other chief ports. The peace commission appointed by the President is to decide, it is said, what is to be done with the islands. This at least seems to be the idea of the administration; but whatever the commission may decide, I, as a Filipino—with a thorough knowledge of my countrymen and of the conditions, assert that the decision of this commission can in no way affect the destiny of the archipelago. This may seem a strange statement, but it is nevertheless true. Suppose that the Americans decide to keep the islands, which are now virtually theirs by right of conquest and possession—the natives will receive the exchange of Spanish tyranny for American liberty all too gladly. There will be no opposition; for this is the logic of destiny, and in line with the trend of events.

Should, however, the commission decide that the southern islands shall be given back to Spain, while Luzon alone is retained by the United States, believe me, this decision will be rendered impossible by the attitude of the natives themselves—for the Visayas, the inhabitants of the southern islands, are even more fierce and warlike than the Tagalos, the natives of the north, and will surely not brook Spanish misrule while their brothers are enjoying the benefits of American civilization. Suppose furthermore, that the commission decides to give all the islands back to Spain, the United States to retain a coaling and naval station and to receive indemnity for losses incurred while in the orient?

The money might be paid and the coaling station would probably be given up; but the islands can never again come into Spanish possession. I will tell you how I know this. Even in 1896 the Society of the Katipunan, founded by the Philippine martyr, Dr. Rizal, whose sworn object it was to drive the Spanish oppressor from the archipelago, numbered 300,000 members. Within the past six months, this order has grown tremendously. Victory after victory over the once feared Spaniard was won by Aguinaldo and his enthusiastic followers. The back of the Spanish power was broken and the morale of their army was forever destroyed. The natives found that when equally armed, a Filipino was as good as a Spaniard any day. Thus the cause of the insurgent has been strengthened, and the Katipunan now numbers 600,000 members, all of whom have sworn that their country shall be free from Spanish rule.

This is not commonly known, but it is true, and I do not believe that even 500,000 Spaniards will now be able to conquer my country and keep it in subjection. The Filipinos have tasted the sweets of liberty and the fruits of victory. They will not and cannot be deprived of them.

The Spaniards have broken every promise that they have ever made and

they can no longer be trusted. Far different is the feeling towards the Americans, who are now regarded by the natives as their deliverers from Spanish bondage. But if the Americans give the islands back to Spain, they, as well as the Spaniards, will incur the eternal hatred of the islanders.

Now this is what the Filipinos want, and this I know is what they consider themselves entitled to have—in fact it is commonly understood in the islands that the following has been guaranteed them by their American allies:

Independence from Spanish rule shall be proclaimed. A protectorate shall be established with a government designated by the American representatives, and approved by the insurgent leaders. This government will recognize such temporary adjustments as may be made by the American or European commissioners.

If a protectorate be established, it will be of the same kind and nature as arranged for Cuba.

The ports of the Philippines shall be opened free to the commerce of the world.

Precautionary measures shall be adopted against Chinese immigration, so as to regulate their competition with the natives who at present suffer severely thereby.

The corrupt judicial system at present existing in the islands shall be promptly reformed—such reforms to be intrusted to competent American officials.

The complete liberty of speech, of associations and of the press, shall be declared and maintained.

Religious toleration must be made general throughout the islands; but the friars or religious corporations of whom there are about 5,000, who have been a cancer in the body politic, and who have ever ruled the provinces with an iron hand, demoralizing the civil administration and blasting every reform, must be expelled root and branch.

The parish priests, whose presence is most necessary and beneficial, must remain undisturbed in the performance of their sacred calling.

Measures conducive to the discovery

will be the logical outcome of the situation.

The value of the archipelago as a commercial center, a strategic base, and as a vantage ground for the tremendous trade with Asia, is apparent at a glance. With Hawaii and the Philippines in her possession, America should fear no competitor.

And then the islands themselves offer wonderful inducements to the American investor. The mineral wealth of the colony is fabulous. It is a tropical Klondike. Fortune also awaits him who will put enterprise and a working capital into the sugar, tobacco, coffee, hemp, and lumber industries. With the most primitive machinery even, many of the natives have been able to reap great wealth, while the Chinese, by their slow but sure methods, have often made enormous fortunes. The agricultural resources of the islands are manifold and truly splendid, and American enterprise should make the most of them. Not more than one-sixth of the land is now under civilization. There is no reason why Luzon should not be another Java, why Mindanao should not become a second Ceylon. This is America's opportunity and ours.

True, many problems ask for solution. It will take diplomatic manipulation to reconcile the race differences among my countrymen. But it can be done.

On account of the great number of islands and the multitude of races—between whom there is a strong feeling of jealousy—I am afraid that a native republic at present would end in failure. But give us a Philippine protectorate and a Congress at Manila, to which representatives from every race and from every province can be sent—so that every Filipino will have his own representative—and this problem will be on the way to a proper solution. Let Americans control the archipelago, and within twenty-five years thousands of investors will flock to the colony, a network of railways will be spread over the principal islands, and new ports will be opened. The result will be that the productiveness of the colony will be greatly augmented and its trade with the outside world will be increased ten fold. At the same time the natives

after the Americans assume entire control. Even under the inefficient, corrupt, and disastrous Spanish regime (before the recent revolution had made a large army necessary) the colony was administered with but little aid from the home government.

I would suggest that the American government appoint an administrative advisory council or cabinet of nineteen, composed of a native from every civil province, who is conversant with the conditions there.

Let the provincial governors for the present also be Americans—not politicians, but jurists of ability and repute, for the office combines judicial as well as executive functions, and much revision and application of law will be found necessary, should the office of provincial governor, as well as that of representative to the congress, be made elective, when the natives shall possess the franchise, which I believe should be based upon both an educational and property qualification. The minor offices should all be filled by natives. By this system the skeleton of the present government would be maintained, and there would be no violent changes. A democratic despotism—if such a paradox is permissible—is what the colony needs before it can be made ready for all the functions of true democratic government.

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THE FALL OF MANILA—THE ATTACK ON FORT ANTONIO ABAD. From HARPER'S WEEKLY.

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and development of the great natural resources of the country must be adopted and at once enforced. The development of the public wealth shall be facilitated together with the opening of roads and roadways.

Restoration to the natives of the lands held by the religious orders, except where lawfully acquired by the latter.

No arrest without a judge's warrant. The existing obstacles to the forming of commercial enterprises and investment of foreign capital, shall be taken away, and encouragement shall be given to every industry.

The new government shall keep public order and prevent every act of reprisal against Spaniards.

Abolition of the fifteen days' compulsory labor.

The Spanish officials shall be allowed to return safely to Spain, with their property unconfiscated.

These are the reforms that my countrymen demand and expect. True, all of this may not be attained at a bound, nor is it reasonable to expect it, but they feel that they at least have America's guarantee that these things shall sooner or later be done.

Thirty revolutions have been waged in the islands to secure these reforms. Should America deny the freedom so long desired and so bitterly fought for, thirty more would follow in bloody succession, until liberty became a glorious fact.

My countrymen desire above all things an American protectorate. They desire this even above independence, well knowing their shortcomings, and that the road to self-government is beset with many dangers. But if America withholds her guiding and helpful hand, then the Filipinos desire to try the experiment of government for themselves, free from Spanish influence.

The rule of any other country would also be rejected; and rejected, it need be, by force, for the Filipinos are well aware that a European colony usually means European exploitations.

It seems to me, therefore, that an American protectorate, or annexation

themselves will have learned self-reliance and self-government—the first and truest lessons of civilization. In addition thereto they will be contented, free and happy, while their American protectors will have been repaid a thousand fold for the expense and trouble of their occupation.

It is America's duty, therefore, as well as her opportunity. My countrymen need a helping hand in this new path that they have chosen. Will Brother Jonathan help us? or will he stand by while our ancient enemy again despoils us?

When the United States shall assume control over the group—and I have shown, I think, that no other solution of the question is possible, and when she shall have instituted the various reforms mentioned above, she will find a hearty co-operation on the part of my countrymen—who will, as a rule be found docile and obedient.

Furthermore, it is not to be expected that my countrymen will accept at once an occidental civilization and western self-assertiveness in its entirety. Such acceptance must be gradual, and will be a work of many years; but if Americanism—modified by the native character and by the complex conditions of the east—flourish there after being carefully nurtured for a century, the United States will have accomplished a great work for the good of the world.

I have already spoken of the material benefits to be derived from American control, and yet I have heard it asserted that it will require a standing army of 25,000 Americans to keep the natives from murdering each other, and that this will entail an expense which will neutralize the commercial profits of the Americans.

This can in no event be true. Such an army may be necessary for a year; but the natives themselves will eventually form the guard for civil protection and for defense against foreign aggression, and such army can be supported entirely by home taxation. Nor need such tax be onerous. With an efficient and economic administration the colony should be self-supporting in five years.

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COUSIN TO THE PRINCE.

An American Girl May Join Herself to the English Royal Family.

On Monday, October 24, Miss Marie Churchill, of New York, will marry Harold Baring, of London. Harold Baring is a cousin of Lord Revelstoke, who is said to be engaged to the Princess Victoria of Wales; thus it will be seen that by a very short stretch of courtesy the Prince of Wales can call the future Mrs. Baring cousin.

Miss Marie Churchill is one of the most beautiful young women in New York. Although not quite as prominent in society as many of its proclaimed belles, she moves in a very select circle, going out only when it pleases her, for she is not particularly fond of entertainment. At the famous Bradley-Martin ball she was decidedly the belle, and at a garden party given by the queen two years ago she was pronounced the most beautiful American present.

Harold Baring, the groom-to-be, belongs to the celebrated banking firm of London. He is the same Baring who

was at one time engaged to Miss Grace Wilson, who is now Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr. It was rumored at that time that the engagement was broken off because the Barings had lost their money, but this was indignantly denied by the Wilson family, who said that the engagement was severed for other reasons.

Harold Baring is a very dignified, quiet young man, who occupies a very select niche among London's most exclusive set.

Miss Churchill owns a ton of jewelry, among which can be mentioned a marvelous string of pearls which goes around her neck fifteen times and hangs to the waist. Accompanying this magnificent pearl necklace are a pearl bracelet and a gorgeous tiara. The young couple will live in London, and it is doubtful if Miss Churchill's friends on this side of the water will have the pleasure of her society again in this country.

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